



III.C.

TO: Long Range Planning Committee
VIA: Brandol Harvey, AICP, Chief of Planning
FROM: Christopher Lawrence, AICP, Comprehensive Planner
DATE: September 2, 2004
RE: Minutes from the August 12, 2004 Long Range Planning Committee Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Long Range Planning Committee met on Thursday, August 12, 2004, at 12:00 pm. Members present were Lancaster, Newcomb, and Novak. Harvey, Hundley, Lawrence, McKinney, and Schirmer represented staff.

II. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 1369- An Ordinance Amending the Blacksburg Town Code, Appendix A, Zoning and Appendix B, Subdivision to Incorporate Changes recommended upon the Annual Review of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances – Shawnee Swim Club Rezoning Only

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1. Staff Presentation

Mr. McKinney reviewed the Comprehensive Plan history and RKG study explaining why the area was considered for multifamily as the future land use. In addition, the RM-48 zoning district permits limited commercial uses as special uses. The Comprehensive Plan addresses this area in terms of the appearance as a gateway into town. The plan also addresses specific areas as commercial nodes, whereas the future land use of this area is specifically designated as high density residential.

Mr. Harvey reinforced that the staff analysis of land use valuation is based on a preliminary review of the county tax assessment and in no way should be considered as a formal land use valuation. Any formal valuation would have to be completed by a trained and certified professional.

Ms. Newcomb asked why the Seven-Eleven, gas station, and car wash businesses were not considered as part of the rezoning request?

Mr. Hundley stated that the sizes of these parcels are small and the current uses are neighborhood commercial in scale. The lot size does not lend itself to large scale interchange commercial uses.

Ms. Newcomb asked what benefits the rezoning would create for the swim club?

Mr. Harvey stated the result of the rezoning would encourage the preservation of the neighborhood, many of which are members of the club. In addition, the rezoning would not change the club's nonconforming use status.

Mr. Lancaster asked if there was another option available, such as rezoning the club's property to Planned Commercial?

Mr. Lawrence stated that a planned district requires the owner of the property to proffer specific conditions. The proffer must be voluntary by the owner and cannot be a requirement by the local governing body. Therefore, a planned district could not be initiated by the town.

Mr. Lancaster stated that his worst fear would be a truck stop at this location under the General Commercial district. He asked whether it would be possible to add additional use or design constraints to the General Commercial district to restrict certain large negative uses?

Mr. McKinney stated that the Comprehensive Plan's future land use is based on a 40-year vision. The long term use of the this property is in question, and the proposed rezoning to RM-48 would be one possible means to implement the vision. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance can be considered next year during the 2005 Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Annual Update.

2. Public Comment

Ms. Kay Kriz asked what the vision for this area is and why it was established as such?

Mr. McKinney stated that the vision is for high density residential which was established as part of the Comprehensive Plan's public process in 2000.

Mr. Martin Janson stated that the club membership must approve decisions such as relocating or renovations to the pool.

Mr. Doug Echols, a previous club board member, stated that the board had reviewed other property locations. After reviewing the zoning restrictions and other develop requirements and costs, the determination was to remain at the current location and renovate the facilities.

Mr. Janson stated that, as part of the rezoning the club would loose use of about 20% of the property due to increase setbacks of the new district. The lot coverage would be reduced by 25%. The value of the property could be reduced by up to half if the rezoning was approved. The pool's number one asset is the value of the property, which enables the pool to leverage financing for major capital

improvements. The risk of losing significant land value would jeopardize the future financial stability of the club.

3. Discussion

Mr. Novak stated his concern was that the club could be sold and what comes in to replace it may not be in conformance with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. This may not be an eminent danger, but the rezoning is the right thing to do.

Mr. Echols stated that not having commercial in that location encourages more vehicular traffic rather than pedestrian traffic. Having distinct zoning districts that do not complement each other creates this condition. In addition, the property is located among many high-density apartment complexes. Students are forced to drive rather than walk to commercial services.

Mr. Novak stated that through the rezoning, the level of regulatory control is increased.

Ms. Janet Buss stated that she supported the club members. She understood the fear of commercial uses but RM-48 uses could create just as many problems.

Ms. Newcomb stated that in her neighborhood, several Special Use Permits were fought very heavily. She can see both sides of the issue through supporting the Comprehensive Plan and supporting the owners of the property.

Mr. Novak asked if the overall consensus of the committee was to forward the application to the whole Planning Commission without a Long Range recommendation?

4. Recommendation

The committee forwarded the application to the Planning Commission without a recommendation.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

The Long Range Committee elections were postponed until the September meeting to allow additional members to attend and participate in the chairman election.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm. The next meeting of the Long Range Planning Committee is scheduled for September 9, 2004.